WHAT IS MAMLUK IMITATION SULTANABAD?

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Abstract

Examples of 'imitation Sultanabad' are seemingly ubiquitous at all major Mamluk sites in Bilad ash-Sham and Egypt, yet there is still confusion as to what qualifies as 'real Sultanabad'. What is beyond question is that all the variations are fourteenth century products, although few examples of the 'real thing' have been scientifically excavated in Iran itself. Through working on the Iranian, Mamluk and Golden Horde material and identifying diagnostic shapes I can demonstrate how to distinguish between the different products and their decoration. As the contemporary Golden Horde material is little known outside of the Russian-speaking world it is appropriate to include it, in the hope that examples may be identified from Mamluk sites in the future.

Introduction

There have been numerous studies concentrating on the ceramic arts of Ilkhanid Iran [the most recent being Watson 2006], but comparatively few on those of the Mamluk world, other than archaeological reports [Walker 2010], and none specifically comparing the output of these two closely connecting worlds. There was a third major player in Western Asia at this time, namely the Mongol Jochid dynasty generally referred to as the 'khans of the Golden Horde' or the 'ulus Jochi,' that controlled much of the Volga basin, the Crimea, and Transoxiana, once the homeland of the Khwarazmshahs, who had been centred around Konya Urgench in present day Turkmenistan until they moved into Khurasan after overcoming the Seljuks at the end of the twelfth century. The less well-known Jochid material culture is an extremely important dimension of this complex Turko-Mongol world. Little of the Russian archaeologists' work has been published in a western language, and their publications are difficult to locate, thus the topic has proved to be a challenging one. The situation has been greatly facilitated by the internet and easier contact with Russian, Uzbek, and Kazakh colleagues through recent conferences. What is most fortuitous from an archaeological point of view is that their two capitals on tributaries of the Volga – namely Saray and New Saray, identified by Fyodorov-Davydov [1984: 17] as Selitryonnoye and Tsarevo – were both established on virgin sites [*Ibid.*, 9].

Golden Horde Archaeology

Selitryonnoye's finds' starting date is mid-thirteenth century, although they largely investigated the fourteenth century levels. Tsarevo's occupational levels start in the mid-fourteenth century, which is useful for the chronology of the finds. Following years of fieldwork campaigns at both sites, and many others in the Volga basin, Stary Krym in the Crimea, Saraichik on the Ural River, just north of the Caspian Sea, in Kazakhstan, Konya Urgench in Turkmenistan and Mizdakhan in Uzbekistan, we have a much fuller picture of the material culture of the Golden Horde. At Selitryonnoye a series of pottery workshops dating to the fourteenth century have been excavated, many of which were producing what the Russians call *kashi* or 'semi-faience' and what we know

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as composite-bodied siliceous wares, fritwares or stonepaste wares (hereinafter 'siliceous wares'). Updraught kilns were used and all the kiln furniture finds, consisting of trumpet-shaped supports (Plate 1), trivets (Plate 2), and glaze testers are similar to those found in the Mamluk and Ilkhanid world [*Ibid.,* illustrations 85 & 86]. Perhaps even more interesting is the discovery of stucco plaster moulds (Plate 3). The difficulty of working with a siliceous paste as opposed to a much more plastic clay one has long been recognised, and the Russian archaeologists found evidence for manufacturing these *kashi* wares in piece-moulds:

> "*The dispute as to how* kashi *vessels were formed was finally resolved by the finding of a large number of alabaster* [for this read stucco] *piece-mould components in the potter's shop at the Selitryonnoye site. The mould also produced the relief on the* kashi *sherd*." [*Ibid.,* 144]

This latter point was certainly not the case in the Ilkhanid and Mamluk equivalents, the relief for these was definitely created with slip-trailing. Fyodorov-Davydov goes on to say that they were not biscuit fired, only having a single firing once the decoration and glazes were applied. They also found evidence for recycling fired tile fragments that were ground down for reuse [*Ibid.*, 144].

Stucco moulds for star tiles were found at Takht-i Sulayman [Morgan 2005, xv], so perhaps there is a case to extrapolate and suggest a similar technology of moulding vessels and finishing them on the wheel was practised in Iran, Syria and Egypt. No other *kashi* workshops have been excavated on the Volga or Crimean sites, but Emma Zilivneskaya [personal communication at conferences in Kazan 2006 and Nukus 2007] who has been working in the Lower Volga for a considerable time, is convinced they will find some eventually. Kazakh archaeologists at Saraichik have found several kilns for everyday clay vessels, but have yet to find any *kashi*-producing ones, and fear they may have been eroded away by the meandering Ural River which has cut away large sections of the industrial area of the site [Samashev *et al.* 2008, 14–15].

Ilkhanid Classification

Oliver Watson [Watson 2006, 325–6] has suggested an amendment to the Sultanabad classification, as described by Arthur Lane in Late Islamic Pottery [Lane 1957, 10–13] separating the geometric and panel-styled wares from the grey-slipped and polychrome relief wares. Morgan has named the grey slip-relief ones 'coloured ground' [Morgan 1995] and the polychrome relief ones 'Aragh'. I have adopted the term 'coloured ground' too, but prefer 'polychrome relief' to describe Morgan's Aragh wares (Plates 4a & b). This fits in well with the Mamluk context of 'imitation Sultanabad'. My thesis will include all the differences between the geometric and panel style wares too [Wade Haddon, forthcoming]. There have been three doctoral theses written on the topic of Ilkhanid fine wares: Peter H Morgan [Morgan 2005] for the University of Oxford; Madame Mathias-Imbert [Mathias-Imbert 1992] for Sorbonne IV; and Tomoku Masaya on the tiles of Takht-i Sulayman for the Institute of Fine Arts in New York [Masuya 1997]. Morgan is a great exponent of a potters' diaspora, and suggests they were taken forcibly in 1260 from Raqqa to Iran. Then, with the fall of the Ilkhanids in the mid-fourteenth century he proposes that these potters' families moved back to Syria, settling in Damascus [Morgan 2005, 78]. I have not found any textual evidence to support such a theory, but it is certainly a convenient way of explaining the transmission of decorative techniques and designs. I question the reliability of using potters' *nisbahs* to indicate their immediate heritage and birthplace, and suspect that in many instances they may have been used by the workshops to imply quality and not actuality.

Background History

Most commentators suggest that the Mamluk-Mongol conflicts post 1260 barred all trade, yet it

was Jazīra-born Majd al-Dīn al-Sallāmī, slave trader to the Mamluk Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (r. 693–94/1293–4, 698–708/1299–1309, 709–741/1310–41), who negotiated the eventual peace treaty in the 1320s, which would imply regular contact and better relations with both protagonists at a commercial level throughout the conflict, albeit with the occasional hindrance and lack of security on the caravan routes [Tsugitaka 2006]. It is important to remember that many of the Mamluks also had relatives in Iran and shared a common culture with the ruling elite. And, what is relevant to this paper is the fact that all three polities had well-established ceramics industries in their urban centres, which most probably would have relied on middle class and not princely patronage, which as Yves Porter has demonstrated had persisted under Khwarazmshah rule in Iran after the first Mongol invasions of 1220/21 [Porter 2006]. I accept that the evidence for Raqqa indicates a cessation in production after 1260, but perhaps that was because it became a border town largely deserted except for the military, vulnerable to tribal incursions, and as a consequence the merchant classes, the potters' patrons, moved their trade to a more secure location, and the potters would have followed them. During prolific periods of building activity, such as there were in the first half of the fourteenth century teams of craftsmen would have moved to the work, but there are no records indicating that this was state sponsored or just a natural process.

Diagnostic Features in the Decoration

The material should speak for itself, so let us examine examples from all three production areas (Plate 5). Unfortunately very little of the Ilkhanid material is known from excavations or surveys. Note the similarities and differences. Typically the Golden Horde infill on the grey ground between the foliage and the figure of Burak is stippled with single dots; the Mamluk example has roughly executed fine lines, pointed trifoliate leaves and iron red – a colour *never* found in examples from the other two areas; the Ilkhanid example is more neatly executed with fine lines and the important difference with the foliage is that it has much more rounded, cotton ball-like trifoliate leaves than the diagnostic Mamluk spikey ones, which resemble a duck's footprint. The Golden Horde leaves are elegant trefoils, almost like a fleur-de-lis, on scrolling stems. Note the treatment of the lotus in the fragment illustrated in Plate 6. It is as though the Mamluk potter could not resist accentuating the details of the lotus, another flower and peacock's wings with cobalt blue and red.

Ilkhanid glazes were extremely unstable and frequently highly irridesced, whereas the Mamluk and Golden Horde ones did not appear to suffer to such an extent from chemical reactions in the soil. The English collector, Gerald Reitlinger, who donated his collection to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford kept meticulous notes on all his collection, but a devastating fire in his Sussex home had disastrous consequences on about 5% of the collection, caused not by the fire but by water damage from the fire brigade's powerful pressure hoses. The card for his dish illustrated in Plate 5b included a photograph indicating it was almost complete at time of purchase, but most of the rim and cavetto must have been a plaster infill which was washed away under the force of the pressure hoses. Reitlinger was far more concerned with decoration than aesthetics, and purchased imperfect examples as long as he considered their decoration to be of interest; as a result his collection is invaluable for its variety and scope. The bowl illustrated in Plate 7 is a typical example of how the chemicals in the soil affected these alkaline glazes in Iran. We see this on the few known pieces sourced from scientific excavations and surveys. The German team at Bisitun excavated fragments in the Ilkhanid Palace [Luschey-Schmeisser 1996: plate 50]. We await publication of the Takht-i Sulayman fourteenth century material excavated by Naumann. There were reports given out by the Iranian Cultural Heritage News Agency in 2006 of more recent finds by archaeologist Yousef Moradi of an Ilkhanid pottery workshop, but no examples were illustrated [CHNA 2009]. None have been reported from Sultaniyya to date, and I was permitted to inspect the excavated material held in the Cultural Heritage stores in Zanjan and at the dig house in Sultaniyya with negative results.

So how can we distinguish the Mamluk material from the Ilkhanid and Golden Horde products? Take a close look at Plate 8c and note the use of red to highlight the centres of the stylised lotus flowers and the cobalt blue dots marking the leopard the lotus petals. The Ilkhanid open vessels seldom have blue dots on the interior, never have red details, and the ground is usually a greeny-grey, as opposed to the more bluey-grey of the Mamluk products. All three types have arcaded exteriors, with grey grounds and white slip-trailed vertical lines in relief outlined in black, imitating the moulded lotus leaf petals on Chinese hemispherical bowls (see Plate 6b) [Komaroff 2002, 178]. The picture is different for closed forms, where both the Mamluk and Ilkhanid potters had difficulty in controlling the cobalt which frequently bled into the other decoration. The Golden Horde example (Plate 8a) is distinguished by scrolling foliage and single stippled dots for infills, as opposed to squiggles, hatching and dashes which are found on both Ilkhanid and Mamluk examples. I have yet to find a Golden Horde *albarello* made with a siliceous paste – there are many red clay bodied sgraffiato examples, so they were certainly in use, but perhaps not as containers for more high-value commodities. Indeed, the Mamluks as the major players in the spice trade would appear to have produced proportionally many more *albarelli*, judging from the archaeological finds and numbers displayed in museums. Most of these closed forms had a plain turquoise glaze on their interiors, presumably for economic reasons.

Diagnostic Shapes

So how can we distinguish them other than by decoration? The answer is shape. This becomes the check to balance any decorative queries. Although hemispherical bowls, which slavishly copied Chinese prototypes, are a shape common to all three groups, as a rule the Ilkhanid ones are more finely potted. Most of the other forms are highly distinctive, and are shown in Figure 1.

Mamluk *albarelli* are consistently more evenly proportioned, with the shoulder diameter equalling the carination above the ring base and the neck is longer, with a more projecting rolled rim to secure an animal membrane seal. This is the same for all forms of decoration. Interestingly I have not found any *lajvardina* examples in the Mamluk corpus, but cobalt and lustre was popular [see Watson 2004, 399; Cat R.2 and BM website for G.265]. The other two distinctive forms, and these are not, to my knowledge, found in any of the other territories, are the Iranian 'T-rim' (see Plate 4a and Fig. 1) and the Golden Horde 'rosewater bowl' or *gyulabdan* (Plate 11 and Fig. 1). Both are well attested in archaeological contexts. The T-rim was in use in the pre-Mongol period with slightly different decorative designs and continued through the fourteenth century, but was not in the Timurid repertoire by the fifteenth century. I have yet to find an example in Bilad ash-Sham, other than a fragmentary Kashan lustre piece from Hama, listed by Poulsen as 'faïence Persane' [Riis & Poulsen 1957, 125–6, fig. 384]. As to the so-called rosewater bowl from the lands of the Golden Horde, the extraordinary nipple-like bosses and the spout are useful diagnostic tools and are frequently preserved in archaeological contexts, but have not been found as yet in Iran, Iraq, Egypt or Bilad ash-Sham. They have been found as far west as Novgorod, where Golden Horde wares formed the majority of the foreign imports in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whereas from the ninth to thirteenth centuries Syrian wares were in the majority, indicating either a marked shift in trading contacts [Koval 2006, Table 10.2, p. 188], or the Syrian traders that operated from the Golden Horde centres had assimilated their cultural artefacts by then. We know from Ibn Battuta that there was a large foreign community in Saray, including Syrians [Ibn Battuta 1983, 166]. Of course without written records there is no means of knowing if the objects were traded for their utility, were the containers for commodities traded, or just represent familiar household goods in a foreign trading colony. There was a Christian connection too as a similar bowl to that illustrated in Plate 11 was found buried with a fourteenth century bishop in Novgorod [Mongait 1948], and closer to home in Thessaloniki two bowls were used as *bacini* in the Vlatadon monastry, and assumed to be

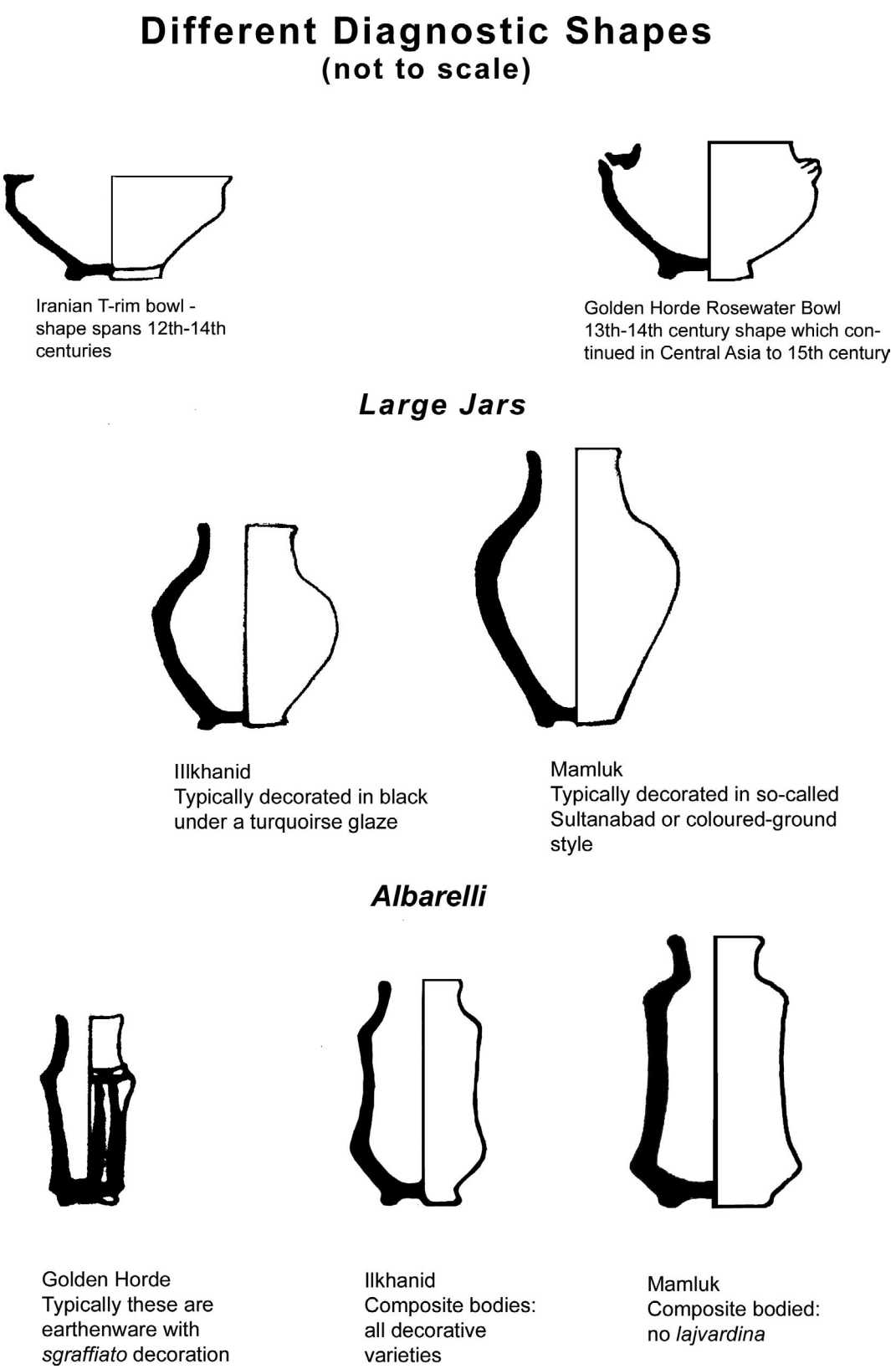
Different Diagnostic Shapes
(not to scale)
Iranian T-rim bowl - shape spans 12th-14th centuries
Golden Horde Rosewater Bowl 13th-14th century shape which continued in Central Asia to 15th century
Large Jars
Illkhanid
Typically decorated in black under a turquoirse glaze
Mamluk
Typically decorated in so-called Sultanabad or coloured-ground style
Albarelli
Golden Horde
Typically these are earthenware with sgraffiato decoration
Ilkhanid
Composite bodies: all decorative varieties
Mamluk
Composite bodied: no lajvardina

Fig. 1

pilgrimage gifts [Poluboyarinova and Sedov 2007]. One fragmentary example of a bowl was found in excavations at San Lorenzo Cathedral in Genoa when they were preparing to install a washroom [Mannoni 1975, plate 2, p. 47, fig. 34].

Mamluk Decorative Differences

Apart from shape, there are other decorative motifs that distinguish Mamluk imitation Sultanabad. The pointed trifoliate leaf appears in both decorative forms: the polychrome relief wares already discussed; then there are examples with similar designs executed in fine black lines on a flat white ground, such as the *albarello* in Plate 9a. There is no slip relief on this type and the outlines are drawn in a much more careless, cursive manner. There is a well-known slipped relief jar in the Louvre [Bernus-Taylor 2001, 78, MAO 618] which is a magnificent example that closely follows its Ilkhanid prototype, but the leaves on the neck are typical Mamluk spikey trifoliate ones and the inscription is in Arabic – those on Ilkhanid vessels were normally in Persian, usually poetry, except for conventional brief blessings. Some ring base fragments have a date roughly inscribed on their interiors – with 'made in the year forty-four' or 'forty-five' (see Plate 13). The 700 is understood – the *hijra* years 744 and 745 are equivalent to 1343 or 1344. Nothing of significance happened in these years, but it has been suggested that they are regnal years for Sultan Nasir Muhammad, who ruled for around 45 years if you discount his times in exile in Kerak [Gibbs 2000, 16]. The reason for inscribing these vessels with these dates is insignificant relative to the importance of the information given to support the archaeology. I have yet to find a dated slipped-relief example, which raises the possibility that the non-relief Mamluk examples could have evolved a little later – the less complex and more easily executed designs suggest mass production. The Ilkhanid coloured ground examples are thought to have come into use in the early fourteenth century, but continued to be used throughout the century [Morgan 1995]. Both Mamluk varieties are found in archaeological contexts, but good stratigraphy for these levels is limited. Perhaps the Aleppo material will assist. There are certainly many more examples that await study there.

Another collector who delighted in the different designs on pottery fragments was Major Gayer Anderson – his sherd collection remains in his museum tucked up against the walls of the Ibn Tulun mosque in Cairo (see Plates 6 and 13). These were acquired in the 1920s and 1930s, but unfortunately any record that he may have made has long since been lost. They are presumed to have been from Fustat. I do have a photographic record and notes on all 700+ fragments – they range from 'Abbasid lustre ware through to Ottoman, with Western and Far Eastern imports, and a good variety of slipper lamps.

Design Influences

So, how do we account for this common link in decoration? Lane proposed and argued convincingly that textiles were the main medium of transmission for the decorative themes found on the ceramics [Lane 1957, 5–10]; Yolande Crowe has published further textile evidence from a dated tomb belonging to a Chinese princess in support of Lane's theory [Crowe 1991]. The exhibition catalogue *The Legacy of Genghis Khan* mounted in New York and Los Angeles included a detailed article demonstrating these influences and how they were transmitted [Komaroff 2002, 169 ff]. During the Mongol period textiles were the most highly valued of diplomatic gifts and in Mamluk Cairo the humble potter would have certainly seen them paraded through the streets during one of the many ceremonial parades. Many of the robes worn by the Mongols in Rashid ad-Din's World History in the Edinburgh University Library are identical to the patterning reproduced on Mongol ceramics (Plates 10a and 10b). The textiles depicted on some of the seated rulers' thrones share the same grey and white palette, as do some of the over-garments. Note the more schematic pointed, trifoliate leaves on the elephant's blanket (Plate 10b), surely an inspiration for the Mamluk leaf? Similar leaves

are found on contemporary Yuan silk tapestries or *kesi* [Komaroff 2002, 174, fig 203]. In this example the lotus stamens have been picked out in red just like the imitation Sultanabad fragments from Fustat illustrated in Plates 6a and 8c. This very distinctive angular trifoliate leaf appears in other media and was ubiquitous on Mamluk portable objects, including enamelled glass lamps, inlaid metalwares, illuminated manuscripts and playing cards.

I have yet to find a reference to an Ilkhanid 'Sultanabad' fragment being found at a Mamluk site. Scanlon never found one in Fustat, and to my knowledge neither has the Polish team in Alexandria. Indeed, there is no evidence to indicate it was in circulation in Iraq, as evidenced by the sherd collection in the Ashmolean assembled by Reitlinger when he was excavating and surveying in the Kish region in the early 1930s. The only slipped-relief ware fragments that I have identified amongst his collection are so-called 'Bojnurd' examples, believed to have been produced in Khurasan [Watson 2004, 386–87; and Wade Haddon, forthcoming], and Mamluk underglazed-painted panel style examples. It will be interesting to compare some of the Aleppo Mamluk material with the so-called Ilkhanid material from Wāsiṭ [Safar 1945, fig. 18, #61] and Nippur [Gibson et al 1998, figs. 20–21]. There is no doubt that the black under a transparent turquoise glaze pieces from Wāsiṭ are Ilkhanid, but the underglaze blue, turquoise and black geometric and panel-style varieties resemble Syrian products. The antiquities trade has distorted our ideas on the distribution of these vessels, and I suspect that Ilkhanid Sultanabad was limited to Azerbaijan, highland Iran and Fars.

Conclusions

I think it would be dangerous to speculate about a mass movement of potters from Iran at the 'fall' of the Ilkhanids in 1335. The various political groupings continued to patronise manuscript production, and the urban elite would seem to have joined in this activity, as outlined by Elaine Wright in her study [Wright 1997]. This group would certainly have needed table wares too. There is nothing to support any diaspora theory for the potters and there was already a well-established industry in both Bilad ash-Sham and Egypt. I have already stated above that *nisbahs* are no definitive guide to a person's origins, they give no indication as to when a family moved, and it could well have been several generations ago. Or, it could have been conceived as a device to assure a certain quality. In the case of the Golden Horde, the picture is very different and they would definitely have needed skilled artisans to build their new cities and establish their craft industries. Russian scholars have suggested that potters from Konya Urgench and other established urban centres were encouraged or indeed forced to move there. For a trade that had no proven central organisational hierarchy it is quite extraordinary how uniform their products were. One explanation I can think of is that these products were used by state administrators and ordered en masse for government administrative posts. We have material evidence that the foreign residents brought some of their own table wares, and luxury imports like Chinese porcelain and celadon were apparent, but no real or imitation Sultanabad as far as I can see, only Kashan lustre and Raqqa wares [Polyuboryarinova 2006]. Certainly celadons were imitated in all three areas, many slavishly copying the original Chinese prototypes. The tablewares in each area were probably considered totally normal and uniform, albeit slightly differently decorated, thus not eliciting any description or comments by travellers. Ibn Battuta marvelled at the wealth of Konya Urgench and when he visited the qadi, who in turn took him to the emir, Qutlughtimur, he commented on inlaid silver and imported Iraqi glass displayed in niches, but there was no mention of ceramics [Ibn Battuta 1983, 166]. It must have been too mundane for comment.

There is one other idea that I have with regard to potters' patrons, and that is the numerous religious institutions that were established in the fourteenth century. The waqfiyas indicate that the endowments allowed for utensils and vessels to feed both the poor and their more wealthy visitors. The state-run post houses were meant to be for the exclusive use of government messengers, so

many of the merchants supported the religious institutions and relied on them for hospitality during their journeys if there was no suitable caravansarai. Ibn Battuta describes the variety of travellers on the road and demonstrates the facility of travel between these different political zones, their inherent hardships and luxuries. An institutional demand may account for a degree of uniformity in the wares produced, yet it was the possibility of contact to be able to exchange ideas and influences that was probably the greatest impetus. I hope I have demonstrated how it is possible to distinguish between the products of these three political centres, but identifying the production centres remains a mystery for the Ilkhanids; Damascus is the most likely centre for the Mamluk material, yet that is by no means proven to date. If it transpires there were several production centres for the Golden Horde material then certainly it is possible that this was the case for both the Mamluks and Ilkhanids.

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Plate 1. Clay trumpet-shaped kiln spacer with traces of siliceous-paste vessels adhered to it from the Russian excavations at Selitryonnoye, excavated by Fyodorov-Davydov in 1969, and exhibited at the Hermitage's Kazan branch in 2006. Astrakhan State Regional Historical and Architectural Museum reserve, inventory number AM3 KP 16257/37 A 7562. Measurements: height 11.5 cms; base diameter 8.3 cms.

Plate 2. Waster consisting of six bowls stuck together, with a tripod spacer or trivet visible between the second and third vessel, from a kiln excavated at Selitryonnoye by Fyodorov-Davydov in 1981; Astrakhan State Regional Historical and Architectural Museum's reserve, inventory number AM3 HB 16530 [Kramarovsky 2006: 141, cat # 591]. Measurements: 21.5 × 21 × 17 cms.

Plate 3. Part of a stucco mould for a capital excavated at Tsarevskoye by A Tereshchenko in the 1840s. Exhibited at the Hermitage's exhibition in Kazan 2006, # 244. State Hermitage Museum inventory number Cap-1580. Measurements: 23 × 28 cms; 2.5 cms thick.

4a

4b

Plate 4a. Ilkhanid Sultanabad or grey-slipped relief ware T-rim bowl, classified as 'coloured ground' by Morgan. It is decorated on the interior with three flying phoenixes on a densely foliated background with lotus blossoms; the exterior has a band of pseudo epigraphy with imitation lotus petals depicted below. V&A collection, London, inventory number C52- 1910: height 13 cms; diameter 29.2 cms.

Plate 4b. Polychrome slipped-relief ware dish, classified as 'Aragh ware' by Morgan. V&A collection, London, inventory number C55.1952. Measurements: diameter 32 cms.

5a

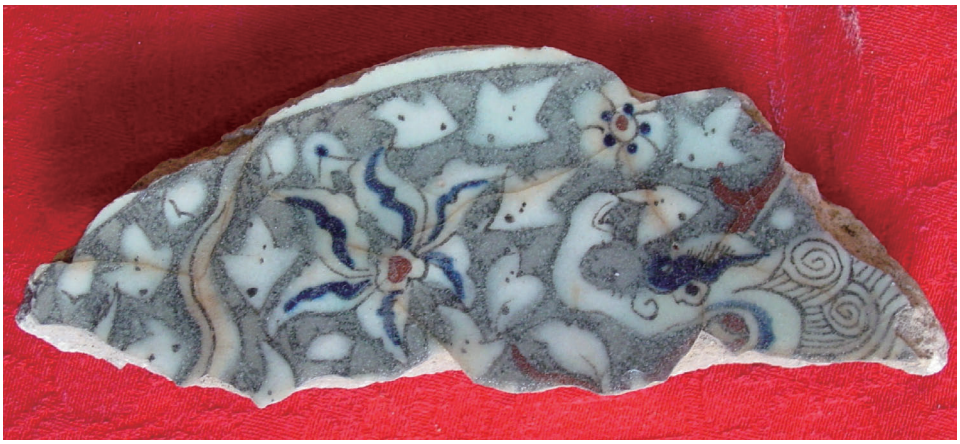
5b

5c

Plate 5a. Mamluk polychrome relief ware, or imitation Sultanabad, with a riderless, richly caparisoned horse - bowl base fragment in the collection of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Museum für Islamische Kunst, inventory number I. 4930 – foot diameter 11.5 cms; height of foot 2 cms.

Plate 5b. Ilkhanid coloured-ground dish with two deer and a falcon, Ashmolean Museum inventory number EA 1978.1667 – diameter 33 cms.

Plate 5c. Golden Horde polychrome-relief ware dish depicted a mythical figure, Astrakhan State Regional Historical and Architectural Museum Reserve, inventory number AM3 KP4708 A 133 – diameter 22.1 cms.



6a

6b

Plate 6a and b. Body fragment of a Mamluk imitation Sultanbad fragment with a lotus flower and part of a peacock amongst trefoil-leaf foliage. Gayer Anderson Museum, Cairo, inventory number 453: 13 cms × 5.5 cms.

Plate 7. Ilkhanid Sultanabad or coloured-ground bowl in the collection of the Reza Abbasi Museum, Tehran. Accession number 1640, photographed in 2002: diameter 21.1 cms, height 9.7 cms.

8a

8b

8c

Plate 8a. A Golden Horde bowl depicting a snow leopard amongst scrolling foliage from the Volga area. Azov Museum of Local Lore inventory number KP25144/78 A1–426/178: diameter 19.5 cms; height 11 cms.

Plate 8b. An Ilkhanid bowl with a Mongol figure seated on a cross-legged campaign stool amongst a field of foliage with rounded trefoil leaves, lotuses and flowers, with gamebirds amidst similar foliage flying around the cavetto. British Museum collection, 1952 2–14.6. Its diameter is 19.2 cms; height 8.8 cms. 'Imase Use by kind permission of the Trustees of the British Museum'.

Plate 8c. Base fragment of a Mamluk dish decorated with a prancing snow leopard in a field of spikey trifoliate leaves and lotuses from the collection of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Museum für Islamische Kunst, inventory number I. 1836: foot diameter 9 cms; height 1.5 cms.

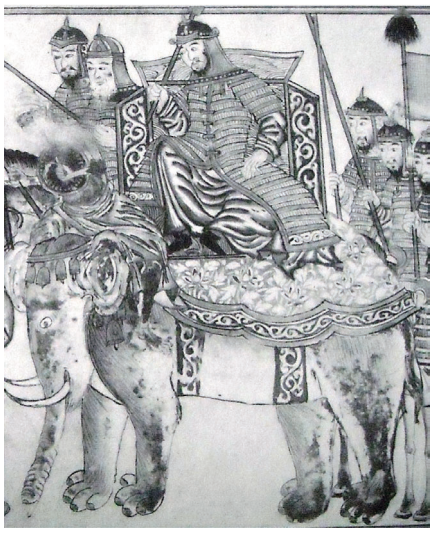
9a

9b

Plate 9a. Mamluk *albarello* in the David Collection, Copenhagen, inventory number 6/2006. The four birds are amusingly depicted – each opening its beak a little more than that of its neighbour as the song unfolds - height 34.1 cms (Photo: Pernille Klemp).

Plate 9b. Ilkhanid *albarello* in the V&A collection, C.219–1912: height 33.02 cms; diameter 17.78 cms.

10a



10b

Plate 10a & b. Details of miniature paintings from the Edinburgh University Library's portion of the *Jami'a al-Tawārikh*, MS, 1306: on the left is Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni wearing an overgarment comparable with Ilkhanid coloured-ground motifs, and on the right the elephant's covering recalls Mamluk imitation Sultanabad decoration with its spikey trifoliate leaves [After Rice 1976, nos. 58 & 57, respectively].

Plate 11. Golden Horde *gyulabdan* or 'rosewater bowl' from the Volga area. Azov Museum of Local Lore, inventory number KP 25355/A1–468/1. Diameter 19 cms [Kramarovsky 2005, # 605].

Plate 12. Hemispherical Golden Horde bowl decorated with a pseudo-epigraphic band below the rim, a stylised leaf band below this and a lotus on thin stem in the tondo. Image courtesy of Christie's London, purchased by the David Collection, Copenhagen in 2000 [Christie's 2000, 135 #269], inventory number 54/2000 [von Folsach 2001, 173, #223: diameter 18.7 cms; height 8.9 cms.

Plate 13. Base fragment of a bowl decorated with trifoliate leaves on a white ground with traces of three birds; the centre is inscribed in Arabic: *'umila sanat / hamsat wa / araba'īn* – 'made in the year 45'. Gayer Anderson Museum, Cairo # 541; base diameter 8 cms.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR, EXCEPT THE VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM IMAGES OF THE ILKHANID WARES, THE DAVID COLLECTION COPENHAGEN MAMLUK ALBARELLO AND THE CHRISTIE' S GOLDEN HORDE BOWL